

**Name of Committee**: Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee (EPCAC)

**General Meeting**: Monday, November 23, 2020

A meeting of the Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee convened on Monday, October 26, 2020 from 6:39 pm to 8:30 pm on Zoom with Parent Co-Chair Catherine Maloney presiding.

| **Members in Attendance**:  **Staff Present:** | Mohammed Ahmed (Success Beyond Limits), Sharon Beason (Parent), James Li (Trustee), Dennis Keshinro (Community-Co-Chair), Catherine Maloney (Parent), Aleem Punja (Parent), Sophia Ruddock (Parent)  Karen Falconer (Associate Director, Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement), Jacqueline Spence (System Superintendent, Equity Anti-Oppression and Early Years), Pardeep Nagra (Manager, Employment Equity), Remi Warner (Senior Manager, Human Rights Office), Precious Sidambe (Administrative Assistant) |
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| **Regrets**: | Kris Guthri (Parent), michael kerr (Colour of Poverty-Colour of Change), Dan MacLean (Trustee), Pablo Vivanco (Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre) |

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| **ITEM** | **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS /**  **RECOMMENDATION/MOTION** |
| **Call to Order, Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands, Reading of the Meeting Norms and Approval of Minutes** | The meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm.  Acknowledgement of Traditional Lands and Meeting Norms were read.  The agenda was approved. |
| **Approval of Minutes** | The approval of the October 26 meeting minutes was postponed to the next meeting as most of the members that attended the meeting were not present. |
| **Back to School Plans: Equity Considerations** | Associate Director, Karen Falconer shared information on the Board’s equity considerations for the back to school plans. Discussions included the student demographics, the organizational structure and student supports.  Currently, there are over 60,000 elementary students in virtual schools and 20,000 high school students. In the second chance to enter virtual schools, both in elementary and secondary, 8000 students moved over to virtual. There is a high proportion, particularly in three learning centres, students of South Asian background followed by students of East Asian background. The proportion of Black students enrolled in virtual school is the same as the proportion for bricks and mortar school. In addition, families were english is the second language are most likely to be enrolled in the virtual school.  Students in K to grade 3 were kept together by local school but staff were not able to do that for grade 4s to 8. For secondary, it is strictly by courses and the challenge is that students lose the community feeling. This is equity concern for the Board, and to mitigate this, for the second semester, secondary schools were tasked to come up with a plan that would serve their students in an effort to be more equitable and more localized in the delivery model. Most secondary schools opted for simultaneous learning. A ThoughtExchange is going to be launched to get the student’s feelings on simultaneous learning which will give the Board an indication of whether they have met their equity goals.  In January the Board will move into a model that is more responsive to the community’s needs who are in virtual school – they are going to go through the learning centre the same way schools do.  With regards to student supports, the Board recently hired a System Lead for Mental Health and Well-being and Professional Services. The System Lead works with community organizations, children and families in addressing health and well-being needs as well as the academic agendas for schools. |
| **New Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement Update** | System Superintendent, Jacqueline Spence provided an update on the New Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement, including the mandate, staffing and the current work of the Centre.  On June 17, 2020, the Board of Trustees approved funding for the creation of the New Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement. The Centre is the first of its kind in public education in Canada and the goal is to improve the experiences and outcomes for Black students. It is a community driven initiative and was created in response to the voices of Black communities who advocated for deeper systemic change from the TDSB. The mandate of the centre is to provide support to Black students to combat racism; navigate complaint processes; identify barriers to success and access appropriate resources; and identify, develop and facilitate culturally responsive and relevant healing practices. Another area of focus will also be to inform policies and procedures in a way that all students may benefit from some of the innovative practices from the Centre.  The Centre will be staffed with 20.5 staff which will include social workers, child and youth counselors, graduation coaches. Centrally Assigned Principal, Karen Murray will lead the staff in the Centre. The graduation coaches have already begun this work in seven secondary schools – they started in March of 2020.  There is currently a project underway– Black Student Leadership Program (YPAR), this program is offered in partnership with York University and provides Black students with an opportunity to engage with youth participatory action research with Dr. Carl James. In addition, there is a new initiative that is currently in development, a stem project with Ryerson University for Black female students. |
| **Employment Equity** | Manager, Pardeep Nagra shared some information on the work being done by the Employment Equity Office, particularly in the area of data collection.  Part of the work of the Employment Equity Office is engaging the system through initiatives, programs and services to enhance and support employment equity at the TDSB. One tool is data collection and the other is the Leadership and Mentorship Program.  The Office collects demographic data in four primary areas:   1. Workforce Staff Census – every five years 2. At point of application – new applicants to teaching and support staff positions 3. Point of hire 4. Principal/Vice-Principal promotion application process   Staff are asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire, which is voluntary. It was noted that the highest response rate is at the point of application.  The data presented in the Employment Equity annual report (attached below) were reviewed with the committee. |
| **Parent and Community Co-Chair Election** | Dennis Keshniro from Belka Enrichment Centre was acclaimed community co-chair of the Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee.  The Parent Co-Chair election was postponed to the next meeting. |
| **Other Business**   * **Terms of Reference** * **Membership** * **Next meeting dates** | The discussion about the Terms of Reference and Membership was postponed to the next meeting. |
| **Adjournment** | The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm. |